

The President still has not told the American people how he plans to bring our troops home, or even what an end to the war would look like. In fact, when pressed, our President, the commander-in-chief, explained that ending the war would be the job of a future President.

Mr. Speaker, this administration likes to claim that those who support the U.S. leaving Iraq are somehow not supportive of our troops, but the very, very opposite is true. Those who would leave our soldiers in harm's way for years on end on a dangerous and ill-conceived mission should ask themselves whether this is the best way to truly support our troops and to truly secure America.

What we need is a smarter approach to national security, an approach that puts sanity back in our Nation's defense policies.

With the help of Physicians for Social Responsibility, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Women's Action for New Direction, I have introduced a plan that would do just that. It is SMART security, H. Con. Res. 158, and it represents a sensible, multilateral, American response to terrorism.

SMART security focuses on investments in multilateral partnerships and regional security arrangements, rather than spending billions of dollars for perpetual war and Cold War relics like the missile defense system.

SMART attacks terrorism at its source with an ambitious international development agenda that supports democracy and economic growth in the troubled regions around the world.

You see, Mr. Speaker, it is time for a fundamental change in our national security policy, a change affected through our actions on the ground and through the bills we pass in Congress. Yesterday's Defense bill was a step in the opposite direction.

The first step in the right direction is an end to the war in Iraq. For the sake of our soldiers, their families and our national security, it is time to stop spending billions of dollars on this war, and it is time to bring our troops home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING CHRIS BROWN

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, Aristotle once said that, "All who have

meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth."

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor one of those responsible for educating the next generation of Americans. His name is Chris Brown, who is a principal of Corinne Elementary School in Box Elder County, Utah. Chris is a 2006 recipient of the Huntsman Award for Excellence in Education.

Now in its 14th year, this award was created by one of Utah's businessmen to honor his father who was a teacher. It nominates up to 500 teachers every year. The winner is chosen by a panel of their peers, as well as business and community leaders. They are remarkable people.

Chris Brown originally planned on getting an MBA, but his wife encouraged him to become an educator, and as she said, he "just fell in love with it." He earned a bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degree from Utah State, and then he taught social studies at Bear River Middle School for 6 years before going on to become a principal now at his fourth elementary school.

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Chris's focus has been on the students, and it goes beyond the school grounds. Every summer he visits every student who attends Corinne Elementary School to understand their home environment, to reach a friendship with their families, as well as to set goals for the upcoming year. He works hard to ensure that children from all walks of life are provided with the best educational experience.

Chris's wife Sharon, who is also an elementary school principal, says, that to Chris, everything about his job is being with the students. He feels an administrative position should give him time to be closer to students. He is in the classroom every day. He teaches social skills to his students every year. He leaves home between 4 and 5 in the morning, very seldom gets back before 7 at night, unless his wife creates some kind of fit, and he goes to work early and stays late so that he can do his administrative duties at that time and has time for the kids during the day.

He is kind of leader who is always trying to find some kind of positive interaction with his students. He sees them in the classroom often. He believes if the students see him in the classroom, they will know what they are doing is important. Every Monday and Tuesday he is in the classroom visiting every one of them, teaching social skills that would be expected of them.

On Wednesdays he meets with the teachers and the literary teams discussing each student's needs. He wants them to know how to read and gives teachers and aides ideas that fit into the student's ability, not some one-size-fits-all program. On Friday the

students come to Chris's office to pass off their spelling words so that they have a positive interaction with the principal.

Mr. Brown makes sure that everyone stays focused on the most important issue, which is the kids. When a growing class size met his school and was problematic, he reduced the number by creating an additional third class which he himself taught.

At his current school he can be seen on the playground kicking soccer balls with his students at recess. In fact, one parent said, the whole second grade lives for PE with Mr. Brown. She overheard her son Daniel tell a home-schooled neighbor, "You have to go back to school so you can have PE with Mr. Brown."

Chris and his wife Sharon were both brilliant, student-oriented classroom teachers. I know, I team-taught with Sharon. They both have taken the same commitment to kids to the dark side of administration. Chris Brown has gone above and beyond the call of duty. Each student under his care knows that he truly cares about them and that he values them.

His commitment to the students demonstrates the quality of leader and teacher that he is. It is right that he has been recognized with this award by his peers, because he does education right. And, besides, Chris Brown still did the best audience belly dance we ever had at our Renaissance Festival.

It is an honor to recognize Mr. Brown. It is an honor to present him to you as someone who does his job in education right.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFazio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IRAQ PLAN

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, for over a year, the American people have asked in increasing numbers for the Congress and the President to work on a real plan for Iraq. As we all know, the American people have been increasingly frustrated by the lack of progress both there and here.

For one thing, the battle lines have grown beyond Iraq's borders. The continuing U.S. presence in Iraq has inflamed tensions throughout the Arab world, and hostile sentiment is growing. That makes it harder to deal effectively with Iran and harder to achieve stability and security for Israel and the Palestinian people. In other words, the

casualties in the Iraq war are spreading to U.S. strategic and diplomatic interests throughout the Middle East.

The price we pay continues to escalate, and so does the violence. Iraq has become an unlimited front without battle lines and without a visible enemy. That is the Iraq war our soldiers face every single day.

On any given day, the level of violence may be more or less than the day before, but no one doubts that the United States' soldiers patrol and rest a heartbeat away from certain violence and potential death. They live the Iraq war 24/7 and patrol an unlimited front in an open-ended commitment of U.S. forces.

While the President waits for the Iraqi clerics to declare themselves ready to take up government, some in the Iraqi Government itself are demanding to know when the U.S. forces will leave. Now, that might sound ungrateful after all the sacrifice by our soldiers and all the money we have spent. On the other hand, it may be the clearest sign yet that the Iraqi leaders are emerging who recognize that Iraq will never stand alone until it is on its own.

They are not alone in this desire. It is what the American people want. It is what they want to see, an end to the unlimited sacrifice by U.S. soldiers, unlimited expenditures by the U.S. Government, and unlimited battle lines surrounding our troops.

Despite the nature of last week's debate, the American people finally have begun to see this House take a step forward, with 153 Members voting in favor of the Murtha plan for strategic redeployment. It begins to address the military issues associated with projecting U.S. power in a region without keeping U.S. forces in the middle of Iraqi sectarian violence. The Murtha military option does something else. It offers a realistic opportunity for diplomacy to take root in ways both familiar and effective in the region.

For some time I have urged the involvement of the United Nations as a first step to diffuse the focus on hostility directed towards the United States. The more the U.S. is seen as directing people, government, and events in Iraq, the more we prolong the violence. That has been a familiar theme in the Middle East and one that I heard repeatedly last August when I met with civic and business leaders at a prestigious Arab leadership forum in Amman, Jordan.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, who served as National Security Adviser under President Carter, has outlined a vision for Iraq that is a thoughtful roadmap for peace. The nations of the Middle East, including Iraq, have relied for centuries on a gathering of regional leaders to resolve conflicts. It is time to establish a way for that historical process to occur.

Adopting the Murtha plan is the first step. U.N. leadership is second, because it sets the stage for the nations to be-

come involved without military forces and without the balance tipping to any one ideology, including some we absolutely do not support.

Finally, the roadmap leads to a regional conference where those closest to the problem have the most to gain and/or lose in solving it.

Now, the role of the United States at this point would be a role the United States can play better than any other nation in the world. We can help broker peace from the sidelines instead of fighting the war on the front lines. U.S. diplomacy has accomplished miracles over the years. Israel today is better off than it was before President Carter called the parties to Camp David. It is time we make a similar commitment to a peace process in Iraq.

Let the Murtha plan be the foundation block on the road to peace in Iraq. One hundred fifty-three Members of the House voted to support what the American people believe: We can protect the American interests without automatically ordering our soldiers into combat. We can project American military might without occupying a country.

We have a realistic plan for Iraq and a growing desire to see it implemented. It may take an election to start the real discussion about Iraq, but the American people are ready, willing, and determined to have it. The election is coming.

BRZEZINSKI'S IRAQ PLAN MAKES SENSE

Former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski suggests that the U.S. could leave Iraq now and create a better and stronger situation.

His simple four-point proposal is (essentially):

1. Washington should quietly ask Iraqi leaders to publicly ask the US to leave, rather than announce arbitrarily a date for the departure. (The catch—If we had any diplomats left in this administration, they could call Ali Sistani and the Kurdish leaders and the top Sunni leaders and ask them to agree to this easily—but the Dubya-Cheney administration's diplomacy quotient is zero!)

2. After such a public request, the US and Iraqi governments would jointly consult on a date for ending the occupation to allow a complete and orderly disengagement.

3. After this, the Iraqi government—not the US—should then also call for a regional conference of Muslim states, some immediately adjoining Iraq, others more distant, to help consolidate internal stability.

4. On leaving, the US should convene a donors' conference of Western states, Japan, China and others with an interest in Iraq's future stability to help with the restoration of the Iraqi economy.

LOWERED VISION

(By Zbigniew Brzezinski)

America's Iraq policy requires a fundamental strategic reappraisal. The present policy—justified by falsehoods, pursued with unilateral arrogance, blinded by self-delusion, and stained by sadistic excesses—cannot be corrected with a few hasty palliatives. The remedy must be international in character; political, rather than military, in substance; and regional, rather than simply Iraqi, in scope.

Rectifying the increasingly messy Iraqi adventure requires understanding its root: the

extremist foreign policy pursued by this administration. Its rhetoric has been demagogic, especially at the very top. Its strategic content has been manipulated by officials preoccupied more with reshaping the security landscape of the Middle East than with maintaining America's ability to lead globally. Domestic support for its policies was mobilized by the deliberate exploitation, as well as stimulation, of fear among the electorate. The Iraq war is not only an outgrowth of this flawed approach to foreign policy, but also its symbol.

Unlike the 1991 war against Iraq, for which more than 80 percent of the cost was borne by America's allies, this time American taxpayers must foot the bill, which is already approaching \$200 billion. The number of Americans dead and wounded is in the thousands and climbing, and the number of innocent Iraqis killed is considerably higher. America's relationship with Europe—which is integral to global stability and to the protection of U.S. interests—has been badly strained. America's credibility has been tarnished among its traditional friends, its prestige has plummeted worldwide, and global hostility toward the United States has reached a historical high.

Most immediately dangerous, the war has focused Arab hatred on the United States. The U.S. occupation of Iraq is now seen by most Arabs as a mirror image of Israel's repression of the Palestinians. The Bush administration's unqualified support for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's brutal treatment of the Palestinians has created a political linkage between the war in Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is evident to almost everyone in the world except the current White House.

The initiatives President Bush took this week point in the right direction, but they are too late in coming and involve too little change in substance. The president now accepts implicitly what top-level administration officials explicitly rejected when I spoke with them just a few months ago: the need for a U.N. umbrella over the U.S. grant of even limited sovereignty to the Iraqi government. The administration, however, still refuses to bite the bullet and make difficult decisions on the role and duration of the U.S. military presence in Iraq or on the larger dilemmas of regional peace in the Middle East.

The administration has yet to confront squarely the fact that the deteriorating situation both in Iraq and in the region will not improve without a politically comprehensive and coldly realistic revision of current policies that addresses four key points: (1) The transfer of "sovereignty" should increase, rather than discredit, the legitimacy of the emerging Iraqi government, and hence it should issue from the United Nations, not the United States; (2) Without a fixed and early date for U.S. troop withdrawal, the occupation will become an object of intensified Iraqi hostility; (3) The Iraqi government should reflect political reality, not doctrinaire American delusions; and (4) Without significant progress toward an Israeli-Palestinian peace, post-occupation Iraq will be both anti-American and anti-Israel.

First, the transfer of nominal sovereignty to a few chosen Iraqis in a still-occupied country will brand any so-called "sovereign" Iraqi authority as treasonous. A grant of "sovereignty" by the United States to the Iraqis—while an American proconsul backed by an occupation army remains ensconced in a fortress in the very heart of the Iraqi capital—will have no political legitimacy. The president's assertion (repeated more than once in his speech on Monday night) that such a transfer will bestow "full sovereignty" on Iraq is Orwellian artifice.

The urgent need is to subordinate, as soon as possible, the U.S. occupation—which is

rapidly alienating the Iraqis—to the visible presence of the United Nations, headed by a high commissioner to whom effective authority should then be transferred. A genuinely empowered U.N. high commissioner could, in turn, progressively yield genuine sovereignty to the Iraqis with much greater prospects of gaining Iraqi public support for the interim government.

The authority of any such high commissioner should extend to the security sphere. The American military commanders in Iraq should retain full discretion to respond to attacks upon U.S. forces in the manner they deem necessary, but any offensive operations they—or other coalition forces—conduct should require explicit authorization from the high commissioner, perhaps in consultation with the Iraqi leaders. That change in command and control would automatically transform the character of the U.S. presence in Iraq from a military occupation to internationally supervised peacekeeping. The U.N. resolution the Bush administration proposed Monday makes token gestures to that end, but it does not fundamentally alter the continued and overt supremacy of the United States in Iraq.

Second, the longer the U.S. military presence lasts, the more likely it is that Iraqi resistance will intensify. It is, therefore, in America's interest to credibly convey U.S. determination to let Iraqis manage (however imperfectly) their own security. Setting a reasonable deadline for the departure of U.S. troops—far enough in the future not to look like a pell-mell withdrawal but soon enough to concentrate Iraqi minds on the need for self-sufficiency—could take practical advantage of the fact that the countrywide situation on the ground is currently not quite as bad militarily as necessarily selective TV images suggest.

April 2005—two years after the occupation began—might be the appropriate target for terminating the U.S. military presence. A publicly known date for the departure of U.S. troops would refute suspicions that the United States harbors imperialist designs on Iraq and its oil, thereby diluting anti-American resentments both in Iraq and the region at large. Only a firm deadline for military withdrawal will convince the Iraqis that we truly intend to leave. Conversely, failure to set a date will encourage Iraqi politicians to compete in calling for early U.S. departure.

Admittedly, there is a risk that a U.S. withdrawal will be followed by intensified instability, but such instability would harm U.S. global interests less than continued (and perhaps rising) resistance to a seemingly indefinite U.S. occupation—which, in any case, has not suppressed low-level but widespread crime, violence, and terrorism. That resistance could take the form of intensified urban warfare, such as that waged five decades ago by the Algerians against the French. The United States could doubtless crush such an insurgency with an intensified military effort, but the political costs of such escalation—massive civilian casualties, pervasive destruction, and the inevitable exacerbation of national, cultural, and religious indignities—would be colossal.

The United States should consult with the principal members of its military coalition about an appropriate deadline. A set date of April 2005 could force other states, notably our European allies, to focus on the need for a wider and more ambitious effort to help the Iraqis stabilize and reconstruct their country. The militarily significant members of the coalition (those with 1,000 or more troops in Iraq) are Great Britain, Italy, Poland, Ukraine, and the Netherlands. Their views should be solicited, if for no other reason than because the publics in these countries are increasingly hostile to continued

participation in Iraq's occupation, while some of the officers commanding their contingents in Iraq have been quite critical of heavy-handed U.S. military tactics.

Third, the internationalization of the supreme political authority in Iraq and the setting of a date for U.S. withdrawal will require a redefinition of the oft-proclaimed (but largely illusory) goal of transforming Iraq into a democracy. Democracy cannot be implanted by foreign bayonets. It must be nurtured patiently, with respect for the political dignity of those involved. An assertive and occasionally trigger-happy occupation is no school of democracy. Humiliation and compulsion breed hatred, as the Israelis are learning in the course of their prolonged domination over the Palestinians.

Post-occupation Iraq will not be a democracy. The most that can be practically sought is a federal structure, based on traditional, often tribal, sources of authority within the three major communities that form the Iraqi state: the Shia, the Sunnis, and the Kurds. It would be unwise, however, to demarcate these communities into three territorially defined regions, for that would almost certainly produce intense border conflicts among them. Until the dust settles from Saddam Hussein's dictatorship and the U.S. military intervention, it would be wiser to rely on the traditional arrangements within the more numerous existing provinces—a strategy that could promote political compromise across sectarian lines. The result would likely be a somewhat Islamic Iraqi national government that roughly reflected the country's demographic, religious, and ethnic realities.

Fourth, but far from least, the United States must recognize that success in Iraq depends on significant parallel progress toward peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the single most combustible and galvanizing issue in the Arab world. If the United States disengages from Iraq before making significant headway toward settling that dispute, it could face a sovereign Iraqi government that is militantly hostile to both Israel and the United States.

Therefore, the United States—if it is to gain any international (and especially European) support for remedying its Middle Eastern dilemmas—will have to clarify its stand on the eventual shape of an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. It should by now be clear that the conflict will never be ended by the two parties on their own. U.S. unwillingness to define, even in broad terms, the fundamentals of a peaceful outcome abandons those Israelis and Palestinians who genuinely desire peace to the mercies of their extremist leaders. Furthermore, endorsing Ariel Sharon's goals but ignoring the Palestinian side of any compromise is delaying, rather than accelerating, the peace process—while compounding the suffering on both sides.

To mobilize those Israelis and Palestinians who seek peace, and to convince the Middle East that U.S. occupation of Iraq is not simply a conspiratorial extension of Israeli domination of the West Bank, the United States should more explicitly state its position regarding the six key issues that a final Israeli-Palestinian peace will have to resolve: not only (as Israel demands) that there can be no right of return for Palestinian refugees, and that the 1967 lines cannot automatically become the final frontier, but also that there will have to be equitable territorial compensation for any Israeli expansion into the West Bank; that settlements not proximate to the 1967 line will have to be vacated; that Jerusalem as a united city will have to be shared as two capitals; and that Palestine will be a demili-

tarized state, perhaps with some NATO military presence to enhance the durability of the peace settlement.

A fundamental course correction is urgently needed if the Middle East is to be transformed for the better. Slogans about “staying the course” are a prescription for inflaming the region while polarizing the United States and undermining U.S. global leadership. A bold change of course—given the gravity of the situation confronting the Iraqis, Israelis, and Arabs more generally, as well as concerned Europeans—could still snatch success from the tightening jaws of failure. But there is little time left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BILIRAKIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN HONOR OF THE INAUGURAL CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Caribbean American community in honor of the first-ever National Caribbean American Heritage Month.

On June 27, 2005, the House unanimously adopted H. Con. Res. 71, my resolution to declare June National Caribbean American Heritage Month. On February 14, 2006, the Senate followed suit, thanks to the work of Senator SCHUMER of New York and Arielle Goren on his staff.

And let me begin by recognizing the many people who helped realize this 2-year bipartisan, bicameral effort, because this was quite a feat. First, I want to recognize our colleague, a great leader on so many issues and especially on health care, Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN from the Caribbean, who has been tremendous in terms of bringing us together to address the issues of health disparities throughout our country and throughout the world.

Also, I would like to thank the Institute of Caribbean Studies, especially Dr. Claire Nelson and her team, for joining us in this effort from the very beginning.

Also, we must recognize our friends from the Caribbean diplomatic corps, who worked so hard to spread the word about this effort both at home in the Caribbean and in their embassies and consulates across the country.